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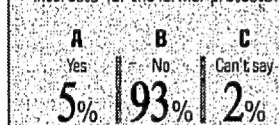


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'Biases, policies force women out of science'

MIHIKA BASU
MUMBAI, MAY 9

DOMESTIC pressures and the demands of raising a family are not the only reasons women in India give up pursuing pure science studies and research.

Institutional barriers, organisational biases, lack of opportunity and discriminatory policies are equally responsible, according to a poll of women scientists conducted by researchers at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bangalore.

The study, sponsored by the Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore, covered 568 women scientists, 312 of whom were engaged in science research (WIR), 182 were not engaged in posi-

tions of long-term science research, (WNR) and 74 were not working (WNW).

The highest proportion of WNW (46%) were married to doctorates working in science research, teaching and/or doing consultancy.

"Several science institutions have informal policies that prevent the employment of spouses in the same organisation. The higher number of WNW having spouses in science may be a reflection of this. Several respondents stated that implementation of such informal policies may have affected their prospective employment in the same," says the study, 'Beyond family and societal attitudes to retain women in science', published in the January-10, 2011 issue of the journal Current Science.

ABLE BUT (OFTEN) CAN'T

90% WOMEN scientists surveyed were married, showing a majority have managed to balance career and family. 59% MEN said women dropped out of science due to family commitments; 52% women gave the same reason. 7% WOMEN said they could not take up positions due to inflexible hours, no room for professional growth and lack of childcare facilities; only 1% men said the same. 46% WOMEN in 'not working' category were married to Ph.Ds working in science research, teaching and/or engaged in consultancy. 60% WOMEN researchers cited childcare responsibilities or transfer of spouse/father as reasons for breaks in career; 86% men gave reasons like further studies and voluntary retirement.

Around 68% of WNW reported that they "did not get jobs" they applied for. The corresponding responses for WIR and WNR were 28% and 42% respectively. Around 22% of WNW stated difficulties in finding jobs, institutions or advisers, affecting their conti-

nity. Family reasons were also cited — WIR (13%), WNR (14%) and WNW (3%).

"The data reveals an important point that although marriage, particularly to men scientists, and other family factors may place indirect constraints on women,

organisational biases and discriminatory policies are constraining factors, leading women to drop out of science. The study is significant as it goes beyond traditional beliefs of family and childcare responsibilities being the reason for women dropping out, and highlights the need to provide supportive and facilitative mechanisms at workplaces," said Anitha Kurup, who authored the study along with her colleague at NIAS, R Maithreyi.

The study finds that only 2.5% of male scientists were never married as compared to 14% of women, indicating that family responsibilities do not appear as hurdles for men as they do for women.

The study shows organisational facilities to be important to counter breaks in

career, with a considerably larger number of women reporting breaks in comparison to men. The reasons given by WIR were childcare/eldercare responsibilities (48%) or transfer of spouse/father (12%).

There were no responses from men indicating the same reasons for breaks in career. Men (86%), rather cited reasons such as further studies, voluntary retirement and poor health.

"It's crucial for organisations to develop mechanisms like childcare facilities, accommodation of spouses in the same institute, and allowing women (or men) to take their jobs to another city/town when their spouses get transferred. Else, it will be very difficult to retain women in science," said Kurup.

An important finding is that despite family and childcare responsibilities, the women surveyed spent the requisite 8-10 hours every day on research. "While this may not be an indicator of quality, the findings disprove the myth that women cannot provide enough time for work and research after marriage and childbirth due to family responsibilities," says the study.

The paper recommends the introduction of mentoring programmes with incentives for mentors, and suggests modification of existing schemes for re-entry of women to pursue science. The authors have proposed facilities like accommodation on campus, transportation and childcare to help women juggle multiple responsibilities.

From the **FRONT PAGE**

SC stays 3-way 'partition' of land in Ayodhya

ahead and pronounce the Ayodhya judgment, rejecting last-minute protests from various quarters that more time should be given for an out-of-court settlement of the dispute.

"The suits have been for declaration (of titles), possession or injunction. None of the parties had prayed for partition. This is surprising. This is a clear case in which an entirely new dimension... an entirely new relief has been given when none wanted it. Obviously this (judgment) has to be stayed," Justice Lodha said

as lawyers from both sides volubly agreed.

Joining in, Justice Alam said: "There is something strange in the way the High Court went ahead on its own".

"You tell us how a decree of partition be passed in this?" Justice Alam's query drew a murmur of assent from the lawyers and spectators in the courtroom as he added that "at least there is unanimity on this aspect".

"This is something which has to be corrected. This cannot go on," Justice Lodha said.

Justice S U Khan of the High Court in his separate judgment had attempted to justify the "partition". Quoting a Bombay High Court ruling, he had observed that a court can on its own accord turn a suit for possession of land into one of partition if it comes to the conclusion that the litigant(s) are not entitled to the whole property.

A decree for partition and separate possession can be resorted to as a measure to prevent any further litigation and multiplicity of proceedings in the Ayodhya dispute, Justice Khan had reasoned.

Let committee take monetary decisions: Subbarao

Listing conditions for the MPC system, he said the central bank should be given legally-backed formal autonomy. "Second, in a situation where inflation dynamics are more often dictated by supply side elements, the central bank's ability to control inflation is restricted. An MPC mechanism in such a situation can weaken the coordination between the government and the Reserve Bank. However, when our financial markets deepen further, operating procedures improve and monetary transmission becomes more efficient, shifting to an MPC system becomes a realistic option," he said.

Close to the policy decision, an established practice for the governor is to meet the prime minister and finance minister informally, give them an assessment of the macroeconomic situation, and indicate to them the proposed policy

WHO FORMULATES MONETARY POLICY

RBI GOVERNOR makes decisions
CONSULTS with the four DGs
BUT NO formal committee structure like in US, UK
NO VOTING in RBI's committee

stance. "This is only a matter of courtesy, and the process has not impinged on the autonomy of the Reserve Bank in monetary policy making," Subbarao said.

The consultation with the finance minister, in particular, should be seen as an avenue for fiscal-monetary coordination, since on a reciprocal basis, the finance minister too takes the governor into confidence on the fiscal stance ahead of presenting the budget to Parliament, he said.

"The RBI in effect functions with a functionally autonomous mandate and there has been no instance so far of the government exercising its reserve powers to issue a directive. This is all the more remarkable since the interaction between the government and the Reserve Bank is closer and more frequent than is typical in other countries, and this draws from the key role of the RBI in financial sector reforms and economic development..."

Systems of accountability are tight, he said. "Since we are not an inflation targeting central bank, there is no formal memorandum of understanding or a 'results agreement' between the government and the Reserve Bank. Nevertheless, we render accountability for our performance on inflation. We explain the rationale for our monetary policy stance quite extensively," Subbarao said.

Proposals to make Lokpals less corrupt, dictatorial

Letter to Annaji - from **Right to Recall PM, Supreme judges' Group**
Convener : **Rahul Chimanbhai Mehta**, B Tech, Computer Science, IIT-Delhi; MS, Computer Science, Rutgers University, USA

(Proposals given here have been submitted on Lokpal consultation website. Number is **A247LB**. If you, the reader, like Right to Recall Lokpal and proposals mentioned here, pls submit **A247LB** on Lokpal consultation site or to Annaji when he visits Ahmedabad on May-11)

Dear Annaji --- Now you are a key member of one of the most powerful committee in-charge of drafting Lokpal bill. And so I am requesting you to put some changes in draft or at least clarify if you oppose them.

The Jan Lokpal draft is written in English so complex that even a lawyer of London cant understand. Pls show 10 pages of US Constitution and Lokpal draft to students and you will find that they can understand former but not latter. You concluded that "citizens want Jan Lokpal", not knowing that less than 5 lakh in India can read such complex English. Anyway, now Govt has provided you all resources to do translation. Can you pls give us Hindi translation in next two weeks?

Now about Lokpal bill. Like dictators, the 10 Lokpals will have power to suspend anyone. Unlike dictators, they wont commit to deliver food, growth and protection from criminals and foreign armies. All power, no commitments. So I fear that Lokpals will become corrupt, nepotist and MNC agents. Your say "Lokpals will be selected by PM, Supreme judges, CAG, CEC etc and so they will never become corrupt". I disagree -- selection procedures guarantee nothing. Fear after appointment is must. I saw all 40 pages of draft. Only check I saw is section-7 saying Supreme judges may expel a Lokpal. But Supreme judges are as non-corrupt as Ministers. So section-7 is useless. Hence, nothing will stop Lokpals from becoming corrupt, nepotist, MNC agents and selling away India for cash or foreign awards. To create fear, I request you to add **Right to Recall corrupt Lokpal** clauses. RTI failed because citizens don't have Right to Recall Information Commissioners. In 2004, I was told that Right to Recall Information Commissioners will come "later". In April-2011, I heard RTR-Lokpal on TV. But I see no RTR-Lokpal-clauses in draft so far. Pls refer Satyarth Prakash chap-6 page-1. It says "**Raja must be Prajaa-aadheen**"; and if Raajvarg is not Prajaa-aadheen, it will rob citizens and destroy nation". So I request you to make at least one out of 10 Lokpals, Prajaa-aadheen i.e. replaceable by us commons. RTR-Lokpal will deter Lokpal from becoming corrupt. RTR-Lokpal clauses I propose are in <http://rahulmehta.com/lokpal.pdf>. Pls add better or these RTR-Lokpal-clauses in draft in few weeks and **not postpone till next life time**. And in case you oppose RTR-Lokpal clauses, pls tell us.

If RTR-Lokpal is too much for you, pls atleast **put a transparent feedback/complaining procedure** in Lokpal. A citizen can visit Collector office and give his **feedback to selection committee** (section-6.10.b) or complaint to Lokpal as affidavit, and Collector's clerk shall scan and upload complaint on Lokpal's website for fee. Purpose is - copies of complaint will come on servers of Collector, CM, PM, Lokpal, Yahoo, Google and 100s more and this ensures that a corrupt Lokpal cant later remove pages from complaints. And any citizen can later visit Patwari/Talati office and add his name to a complaint for Rs 3 fee. Purpose is : if 1000s of citizens have same complaint, all wont need to visit Collector office and create law-order problem. Pls tell us if you support/oppose even a transparent complaining procedure, forget RTR.

About us Right to Recall Group : We request activists to contest elections to inform citizens on how Right to Recall PM/CM, RTR-judges, RTR-Lokpal laws and "Transparent Complaint Filing" can improve India. And we also give newspaper ad, pamphlets. **Contacts**: 98251-27780, <http://rahulmehta.com>, MehtaRahulC@yahoo.com. For details, pls read <http://rahulmehta.com/301.pdf>

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26/11 probe

who raided Mumbai on November 26, 2008 at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus railway station, in front of Hotel Taj Mahal Palace and near Gokul restaurant behind the Taj. They were also found inside Ajmal Kasab's haversack that he left on the terrace of Cama Hospital, the boat M V Kuber which the gunmen used to reach Mumbai, and a bag inside the Taj handed over to the police by the Navy's Marine Commandos.

The Indian Express had reported in August 2009 that the Mumbai Police had turned down a request for the pink foam, saying that the 26/11 trial was underway and the samples were evidence in the custody of the trial court. The police had suggested that such a request be made through a Letter Rogatory (LR) to the court instead.

In early January this year, a Chicago court sent an LR to the Mumbai court seeking the pink foam. The LR was received by the 37th Metropolitan Magistrate's Court which forwarded it to Principal Sessions Judge M L Tahaliyani, who presided over the 26/11 trial.

"The decision on the LR has taken some time since Tahaliyani was appointed as a judge of the High Court and transferred to its Nagpur Bench on March 17. The LR was then to be decided by Principal Judge Swapna Joshi. The decision was pending since the judge was on leave on two occasions, and the prosecution was unable to attend court for the matter at other times. However, the go-ahead for the release of the pink foam is now expected shortly," said an official involved in the process.

"When the FBI had first asked for the pink foam samples we had turned down the request since the trial in our case was underway. However, now we have no objection to it, and the court is likely to give its permission soon. The FBI will have to send an agent to collect the samples from the court," said a senior Mumbai Police officer, who did not wish to be named. The US Embassy cable from Islamabad (204888: confidential) sent by Charge d'Affairs Gerald Feirstein on April 30, 2009, said that Pakistan provided the FBI with a similar pink foam box from their 26/11 probe on their own soil. It said this was "possibly the most important piece of evidence shared (by Pakistan) with the FBI," and that an analysis of the samples from the two countries could help prove that the conspiracy was hatched in Pakistan.

"For successful analysis, the FBI still needs the GoI to provide samples of the pink box in India," the cable said. Under the sub-heading "Significant Hurdles", the cable said that getting some information Pakistan needed to prosecute 26/11 suspects held there would require "high-level intervention" from the relevant governments.

"The two pink boxes found in Pakistan and India are a strong link that proves the conspiracy behind the attacks originated in Pakistan. The GoI has passed its pink box to the FBI. The FBI still requires samples from the foam and glue that make up the box found in India. The GoI has not been forthcoming with this evidence," it said.

According to the cable, Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) found the pink box at a training camp the Mumbai attackers attended in Sindh province. They then handed it over to the US Embassy's legal attache.

BJP targets Tablighi Jamaat over 'Qaeda links'

NEW DELHI: THE BJP on Monday termed as a "very serious matter" the disclosures made by Guantanamo Bay detainees that al-Qaeda operatives allegedly used a New Delhi-based organisation, Tablighi Jamaat, to obtain travel documents and shelter, and sought a response from the UPA government. Reacting to a report in The Indian Express based on Wikileaks disclosures of the prison inmates, BJP chief spokesperson Ravi Shankar Prasad said the party would want the government of India to respond "as to whether it has taken cognizance of such a serious breach of national security". While the BJP took up the issue, influential Islamic outfit Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind denied any links between the Tablighi Jamaat with the al-Qaeda, saying it was a "preplanned conspiracy" to defame the religious organisation.

ENS

Gilani praises ISI

identified in a legal complaint sent to the Pakistani police by the family of victims of the American drone campaign. At the time, the US had said it believed that the ISI had deliberately made the name public.

The new station chief was responsible for directing a large part of the bin Laden operation, including supervision of a CIA safe house from which operatives spied on his compound in Abbottabad. The CIA station chief was not expected to leave Pakistan as a result of his cover being blown, US officials said.

Gilani gave a spirited defence of the ISI, which he described as Pakistan's "national asset".

"No other country in the world and no other security agency has done so much to interdict al-Qaeda than the ISI and our armed forces," he said. But he did not explain how al-Qaeda's leader had managed to remain sequestered for five years in the garrison city of Abbottabad. Gilani's account of the history of al-Qaeda essentially blamed the US for allowing Islamic militants to take hold in Pakistan. "We didn't invite Osama bin Laden to Pakistan or Afghanistan," he said. The US, Gilani said, had encouraged the Islamic militants that fought against the Soviet Union to disperse into Pakistan after that war was over in the late 1980s. And, he said, the bombings of al-Qaeda militants at Tora Bora after 9/11 "resulted in the dispersal of al-Qaeda". "We had cautioned international forces on a flawed military campaign," Gilani said.

A joint session of parliament on May 13 would be given a briefing by the military, the prime minister said.

Hafiz Saeed is India's Enemy No. 1

chief Ilyas Kashmiri and LeT's operational head for Indian Ocean littoral states Rashid Abdullah have taken precedence over the 1993 Mumbai blasts accused and drug lord Dawood Ibrahim, who is eighth in the Indian list. The dossier of the 49 fugitives was handed over by Home Secretary G K Pillai to his Pakistani counterpart Qamar Zaman Choudhary on the first day of the bilateral dialogue. While 18 of those named are Pakistani nationals wanted in Indian cases, the remaining 31 are Indian terrorists or crime lords taking shelter in Pakistan. While Pakistan's Interior Secretary offered no assurances on the list, Choudhary in turn handed over a list of persons identified as RAW agents who are purportedly active in Baluchistan.

The LeT's top leadership involved in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks head the Indian list, followed by the 1993 blasts accused, while Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Maulana Masood Azhar and those involved in the 1999 Kandahar hijacking figure way down.

JKLF founder president and Pakistani national Amanullah Khan and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Mohammed Yusuf Shah aka Salauddin are the two Kashmiri terrorists wanted by India. Interestingly, the names of Indian Mujahideen's founders Riyaz and Iqbal Bhatkal are missing from the latest list with only Amir Raza Khan being named as a fugitive. Apart from the wanted Sikh terrorists now based in Pakistan, New Delhi has asked Pakistan to deliver old Lashkar hands Chaneparambil Mohammed Bashir aka CAM Bashir, Mufti Sufiyan and Syed Zabiuddin Ansari aka Zabi.